

Article - Local Government

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§13–118.

(a) (1) The governing body of Cecil County, by ordinance or resolution, may provide for a comprehensive system for the regulation of domestic animals and wild animals kept in captivity.

(2) The resolution or ordinance may provide for:

(i) the licensing and control of domestic animals and wild animals kept in captivity;

(ii) the establishment of separate domestic animal control districts with separate resolutions or ordinances applicable within each district;

(iii) seizing and disposing of domestic animals found to be dangerous to persons or property;

(iv) the regulation of persons who own or keep any vicious animal or an animal that disturbs the peace of a neighborhood; and

(v) reasonable penalties for a violation of a local law enacted in accordance with this section not exceeding imprisonment for 30 days or a fine not exceeding \$500 or both.

(3) The governing body:

(i) may regulate animals that are hybrids of domestic animals and wild animals; but

(ii) may not regulate or control wild animals that are not owned or kept by individuals.

(b) The governing body of Cecil County shall set the fees, terms, and forms for dog and kennel licenses.

(c) (1) In Cecil County, the county tax collector shall issue a tag with each dog license to a person owning or keeping a dog when the person pays the license fee for the dog.

(2) The governing body of Cecil County shall prepare and supply tags to the county tax collector each year.

(3) The tags shall be:

- (i) composed of metal;
- (ii) imprinted with a serial number corresponding to the number on the license issued to the owner;
- (iii) imprinted with the calendar year for which the tag is issued;
- (iv) 1 inch or less in length; and
- (v) equipped with a substantial metal fastener.

(4) The governing body shall change the general shape of the tags each year.

(5) Tags supplied to owners of kennels shall contain the word “kennel”.

(6) The county tax collector shall replace a lost tag on:

- (i) application by the person to whom the original license was issued;
- (ii) the production of the license; and
- (iii) payment of a fee of 25 cents.

(d) (1) In Cecil County, the owner or custodian of a female dog that is in heat:

- (i) may not knowingly allow the dog to run at large; and
- (ii) shall confine the dog.

(2) A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$25.

(e) (1) In Cecil County, a person may not own or keep a domestic animal that disturbs the peace of a neighborhood or is vicious and bites any individual.

(2) The barking of hunting dogs in pursuit of game is not a disturbance of the peace for the purpose of this subsection.

(3) A person who violates paragraph (1) of this subsection or a court order issued under paragraph (4) of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$500 for each offense.

(4) (i) The District Court in Cecil County shall issue a summons to the owner or keeper of a domestic animal to appear before the District Court if a sworn complaint is received from a person alleging that the domestic animal:

1. disturbs the peace of a neighborhood in the county;
or

2. is vicious and has bitten an individual.

(ii) After a finding that the domestic animal disturbs the peace of a neighborhood or is vicious and has bitten an individual, the District Court may require the owner or keeper to surrender the domestic animal to be euthanized in the most humane manner possible or remove the domestic animal permanently from the neighborhood.

(iii) If the District Court requires the owner or keeper to surrender the domestic animal to be euthanized or removed in accordance with subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, and the owner or keeper fails to comply, a police officer or an agent of the county shall seize the domestic animal and cause it to be euthanized in the most humane manner possible.

(iv) The District Court may order the domestic animal restrained or issue any other appropriate order.

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